



GUIDELINES FOR PERFORMING AND EXPRESSING DOSAGE CALCULATIONS

Purpose: **To enable students performing dosage calculations to know precisely what is expected of them throughout the program.**

In grading all tests and assignments involving dosage calculations, instructors will expect students to adhere to all of the following guidelines. Failure to do so will result in loss of one-half point per problem, even if the math calculations are correct. The basis for these requirements is the safe administration of medications and preservation of the well-being of those clients you care for.

1. Calculations must be carried out to thousandths then rounded off to hundredths in all steps of each problem including calculations for IV pump settings which should read as ml/hr with the answer rounded to hundredths. (Please note the exceptions under numbers 4 & 5 below.)
2. In any answer where a decimal is not preceded by a whole number, a zero must be placed in front of the decimal. The purpose of this practice is to ensure that a decimal is not inadvertently missed during transcription and a large (potentially lethal) amount of drug mistakenly given; e.g. 3mg given instead of 0.3mg.
3. All answers must be identified with a unit of measure (mg, mL, tablets, etc.).
4. Any answer that involves capsules must be expressed in whole numbers. Tube feeding solutions (e.g. Jevity) must also be expressed in whole numbers (both the product and the water used as a diluent are rounded to whole numbers).
5. Any answer that involves an IV drip rate must be rounded to the nearest whole number, e.g. 21gtt/min., rather than 20.6gtt/min. (See #1 above for IV pump settings.)
6. Unless otherwise stipulated, concentration (strength) of a parenteral medication should be calculated as the number of mg per mL (mg of medication per mL of fluid).